

stellar academic background. He graduated cum laude with a B.S. in business from Birmingham Southern College. After managing a live music venue in Birmingham for several years, Bradley entered law school at the University of Alabama, where he served as managing editor of the *Journal of the Legal Profession* and was an active member of the moot court board. Immediately after being admitted to the Alabama bar, Bradley joined my staff on the Judiciary Committee.

In the 6 years he was with me, Bradley served at various times as my legislative counsel, senior counsel and deputy chief counsel on the Subcommittee on Administrative Oversight and the Courts. Throughout that time, he has worked to secure our borders, protect our country from the threat of international terrorism, secure the private property rights of artists and inventors in the information age, and eliminate wasteful spending and destructive litigation. Perhaps most importantly, he showed both courage and unwavering leadership during the Senate's debates on comprehensive immigration reform in 2006 and 2007. Bradley's hard work played an important role during the DREAM Act debate last year. Bradley was an effective staffer during debates on the reauthorization of the USA PATRIOT Act in 2005 and 2006. He also participated in the constitutional advice and consent process for four Supreme Court confirmations and countless important executive branch nominations.

I would just conclude by thanking Bradley for his hard work and for his loyalty. He was more than willing to invest the time and effort necessary to handle a breadth of issues, and he did so with great skill, professionalism and integrity. He was with me during some of the most critical times of my career in the Senate thus far, and his insight will be missed. He has been an excellent public servant because he loves his country and understands and defends its exceptional core values. In addition, he is fun to work with. I wish him the best in his new endeavors.

TRIBUTE TO LUIS TIGERA

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I would like to take a moment to congratulate an extraordinary Illinoisan, Luis C. Tigera. After serving with distinction for 26 years with the Illinois State Police, First Deputy Director Tigera is retiring as the highest ranking career member of the organization and the first Cuban American to hold such a position in the agency.

Throughout his time with the Illinois State Police, First Deputy Director Tigera has served in a variety of positions with the organization. He started his career in law enforcement by patrolling the interstate system of the Chicago area suburbs. He worked his way up to overseeing the statewide guns, drugs, gangs and money laundering unit. Mr. Tigera also managed

and regulated the operations of the gaming industry in Illinois. And he served as senior policy adviser to the Illinois State police director.

In addition to his extensive experience in law enforcement, First Deputy Director Tigera was selected to attend the FBI National Academy in Quantico, VA, where he successfully completed executive management training. He also holds a masters degree in criminal justice administration from Lewis University.

One of the reasons the Illinois State Police has grown and flourished under First Deputy Director Tigera's leadership is his commitment to community. He led an initiative to work collaboratively with community groups and others within the public safety arena. He has always emphasized the importance of team-building and problem-solving as he served as second-in-command of a full-service police agency of 3,500 employees. In addition to his leadership in the Illinois State Police, First Deputy Director Tigera is a member of the Illinois Terrorism Task Force, the Governor's Interstate Gun Trafficking Task Force, and previously served as the Chairman of the Board of the Chicago High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area.

First Deputy Director Tigera has been married to Ana for 26 years and is the proud father of two sons, Luis, Jr., who has followed in his father's footsteps by becoming an Illinois State Police trooper, and Zachary.

I would like to congratulate First Deputy Director Tigera on his retirement and thank him for his service to the State of Illinois.

HONORING OUR ARMED FORCES

Mr. COCHRAN. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to the brave men and women who have made the supreme sacrifice of their lives in defense of our Nation. This Memorial Day, I join all Americans in honoring those brave souls.

Over the past decade since the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States, men and women of the U.S. Armed Forces have been deployed to fight on our behalf in Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Thousands of those courageous servicemen and women have lost their lives as part of these ongoing missions. More than 70 of these warriors called Mississippi home, including 7 brave fighters who have been killed in Afghanistan since we last observed this national holiday. These are the sacrifices that we should keep in mind as we commemorate Memorial Day 2011.

I am deeply grateful to the young Mississippians we have lost over the past 12 months, and my heart goes out to the families and friends they leave behind.

For the record, I now cite the names of these fallen heroes from Mississippi: 1SG Robert N. Barton of Roxie, 35, who died June 7, 2010;

PFC Joshua S. Ose of Hernando, 19, who died September 20, 2010;

PFC William B. Dawson of Tunica, 20, who died September 24, 2010;

SGT Eric C. Newman of Waynesboro, 30, who died October 14, 2010;

1LT William J. Donnelly IV of Picaune, 27, who died November 25, 2010;

SSG Jason A. Rogers of Brandon, 28, who died April 7, 2011; and

SSG David D. Self of Pearl, 29, who died May 16, 2011.

While their sacrifices will leave a deep void in many lives, I hope their families can find comfort in the fact that they served proudly and will be counted among the multitude of Mississippians who, over the long history of our great Nation, have bravely served and courageously given their lives for their country.

Mississippians traditionally identify themselves with a strong support of our national defense and a willingness to serve in our Armed Forces. We also hold fast to the memory of those lost in battle.

In fact, Columbus, MS, proudly claims to be the birthplace of Memorial Day, which was originally designated as Decoration Day to decorate the graves of Civil War soldiers. This tradition evolved into Memorial Day, which was recognized as a Federal holiday in 1971.

As we again gather to commemorate Memorial Day, people across Mississippi will stop to reflect on all those who have perished protecting our Nation, whether in battles long ago or in the ongoing conflicts. We will also affirm our belief that Congress should ensure that those who join our Armed Forces will be the best equipped and best trained in the world.

As a veteran of the U.S. Navy, I am thankful for the bravery and dedication of those who have fought and died for our country in our defense. They are true heroes, and we owe them our solemn gratitude for their service and sacrifice.

SERGEANT KEN HERMOGINO

Mr. BENNET. Mr. President, today I rise to remember the life and heroic service of SGT Ken Hermogino, who died on May 10, 2011, in Herat Province, Afghanistan, of injuries sustained when his military vehicle overturned. Fort Carson cannot replace a leader like Sergeant Hermogino. His passing represents a tragic loss for his hometown of Henderson, NV, and for our country.

Sergeant Hermogino's story is uniquely American. Within 2 months of the horrific terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, that took the lives of nearly 3,000 innocent men, women, and children, Sergeant Hermogino began a military career that would span 10 years and two branches of the armed services. His exceptional character shone in the face of our shared adversity; he chose to serve when his country needed him most.

In 1998, he graduated from Basic High School in Henderson, NV, where he participated in the Marine Corps Junior

ROTC program. This experience allowed him to build up the skills and discipline that would become the foundation of his success in the services. Outside of school, Sergeant Hermogino relaxed by skateboarding, BMX racing, and displaying his talent for fixing just about anything.

Sergeant Hermogino enlisted in the Air Force in 2001, and he served for 8 years as a medical administrator based in the U.S. and Manas, Kyrgyzstan. While he assisted fellow servicemembers suffering from life-threatening wounds, Sergeant Hermogino always felt compelled to expand his contribution. His brother, Marvin Jeff, has said, "He wanted to be more involved."

In 2009, Sergeant Hermogino joined the Army and served in support of Operation Enduring Freedom as a member of the 7th Squadron, 10th Cavalry Regiment, based at Fort Carson, CO. Sergeant Hermogino's bravery and exemplary service did not escape the notice of his commanders. He earned, among other decorations, the Air Force and Army Commendation Medals, the National Defense Service Medal, and the Afghanistan Campaign Medal.

Mark Twain once said, "The fear of death follows from the fear of life. A man who lives fully is prepared to die at any time." Sergeant Hermogino's service was in keeping with this sentiment by selflessly putting country first, he lived life to the fullest. He lived with a sense of the highest honorable purpose.

Today's tribute to the memory of Sergeant Hermogino must also honor his profound love for family. In this spirit, I ask my colleagues to join me in extending our deepest respects and condolences to Norma, his mother, Renato, his father, and to his entire family. Please know that Colorado and Americans across the country are profoundly grateful for Ken's sacrifice. For his bravery in Afghanistan and across the world, he will forever be remembered as one of our country's bravest.

HONORING OUR SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN THIS MEMORIAL DAY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the sacrifice of those to whom we are forever indebted: the brave men and women of our Armed Forces, both past and present, who died in defense of freedom. It has been and continues to be their duty, honor, and privilege to serve. With Memorial Day 2011 approaching, it is our duty to pause and honor those who have sacrificed.

Memorial Day has become the unofficial beginning of summer. Schools are beginning to break for summer vacation, community pools are opening for the season, and friends and family are gathering this weekend for barbecues. It is important that we not lose sight of the true nature of this holiday and I encourage all of us to take time to pause and remember the meaning of Memorial Day.

Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, is a day of remembrance for those who have died in our Nation's service. Since 1868, this time of year has been designated as a time to pause and honor our war dead. It was officially designated a Federal holiday in 1971. An often overlooked tradition is to have a moment of remembrance specifically at 3 p.m. local time.

Throughout the Nation over this holiday weekend we will see many American flags and flowers adorning the graves of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our Nation. I will remember in particular the 104 Marylanders who have been killed in our most recent conflicts, and I will remind myself that our freedom isn't free. I will remind myself of their ultimate sacrifice and I will remind myself of the ongoing sacrifices their families continue to make each and every day.

I am immensely proud of the men and women—fewer than 1 percent of our population—who serve in our All-Volunteer Force. But there is a drawback, of sorts, to having an All-Volunteer Force: the sacrifices of the few are not felt by the many; therefore, they can be overlooked. We mustn't allow this to happen. This environment is much different than the conflicts of the past where nearly everyone had a friend, neighbor, or loved one who wore the cloth of our Nation.

I call on my colleagues and all Americans to remember the true meaning of Memorial Day and take the time to pause and remember those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our freedom and for the continued success of this great Nation.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, as the Senate prepares to adjourn for the Memorial Day recess, I had hoped that we would be allowed to proceed with the consensus judicial nominees ready for confirmation and who are so needed to fill vacancies on Federal courts around the country. Instead, the Republican leadership's filibuster of the nomination of Goodwin Liu is being supplemented with delays of even those judicial nominations supported by Republican home State Senators and approved by Republicans on the Senate Judiciary Committee. This is too bad.

With judicial vacancies continuing at crisis levels, affecting the ability of courts to provide justice to Americans around the country, I have been urging the Senate to vote on the judicial nominations reported favorably by the Judiciary Committee and pending on the Senate's Executive Calendar. The Senate is recessing with 19 judicial nominations awaiting final action. Of those, 16 are by anyone's definition consensus nominees. All 16 were unanimously approved by all Republican and all Democratic Senators on the Judiciary Committee. Yet they remain stalled without final Senate action.

We should have regular votes on President Obama's highly qualified

nominees, instead of partisan filibusters and more delays. With vacancies still totaling 90 on Federal courts throughout the country with nearly two dozen future vacancies on the horizon, there is no time to delay taking up these nominations. Had we taken positive action on the consensus nominees, vacancies could have been reduced below 80 for the first time in years.

All of the nominations reported by this committee and pending on the Senate's Executive Calendar have been through our Judiciary Committee's fair and thorough process. We review extensive background material on each nominee. All Senators on the Committee, Democratic and Republican, have the opportunity to ask the nominees questions at a live hearing. Senators also have the opportunity to ask questions in writing following the hearing and to meet with the nominees. All of these nominees which the Committee reported to the Senate have a strong commitment to the rule of law and a demonstrated faithfulness to the Constitution. All have the support of their home State Senators, both Republican and Democratic. They should not be delayed for weeks and months needlessly after being so thoroughly and fairly considered by the Judiciary Committee.

They include several nominees to fill judicial emergency vacancies, including Paul Engelmayer and William Kuntz of New York, Michael Simon of Oregon, Richard Brooke Jackson of Colorado, Kathleen Williams of Florida, and Nelva Gonzales Ramos of Texas, as well as Henry Floyd of South Carolina to the Fourth Circuit. The nomination of Professor Liu being filibustered by Republican leadership is also to fill a judicial emergency vacancy.

Those nominees who have the support of home State Republican Senators include Bernice Donald of Tennessee to the Sixth Circuit, Henry Floyd of South Carolina to the Fourth Circuit, Sara Lynn Darrow of Illinois, Kathleen Williams of Florida, Nelva Gonzales Ramos of Texas, John Andrew Ross of Missouri, Timothy Cain of South Carolina, Nannette Jolivet Brown of Louisiana, and Nancy Torresen of Maine. In spite of that support, we are unable to secure consent from the Republican leadership to consider and confirm them.

Of the judicial nominations we have been able to get the Senate to consider this year almost 70 percent were delayed from last year. We have only been able to confirm eight judicial nominees that had hearings and were reported for the first time this year. So when some say we are taking "positive action" on large percentages of nominees, what this shows is how many unobjectionable nominees were stalled last year by objections from the minority.

We could have made significant progress helping Americans seeking justice in our Federal courts before